

## ABSTRACT

**DISSERTATION:** Teacher's Cognitive Demands and Preschool Students' Use of Thinking Strategies During Interactive Book Reading

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The study examined preschool students' use of thinking strategies when responding to deep structure questions during interactive book readings. The children were enrolled in two different inclusive preschool classrooms in a large Midwestern city. The study explored which thinking strategies the preschool children used when answering deep structure questions. Also under investigation was the potential difference in usage of thinking strategies between general education and special education students. Data collected included observations and frequency tallies. Information gathered was analyzed using independent sample T-Tests. The classrooms were combined to generate a larger population.

Analysis showed the preschool students in the two inclusive preschool classrooms used all seven thinking strategies during interactive book read alouds. Frequency counts revealed a higher mean usage of schema, making inferences, and determining importance. Further, these strategies were as likely to be used by a general education student as a special education student. Based on the results of the study, teachers should guide and instruct their students about stories within discussions. Teachers should also

select engaging texts guided by student interest, student background, or classroom project. This will allow them to build on information that students have and also create learning opportunities in the classroom that affects the classroom community.